



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

DISCUSSION

ON THE TEACHING OF CIVICS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Some high schools teach civics only as a part of history, that is, with, by, and through history; some, as a part of the American history course, but separated, temporarily isolated, as it were, for six weeks, when a class in American history reaches the so-called critical or constitutional period; some give the last three weeks of the history class to civics; some give one semester to American history and one semester to civics; a few schools give no separate courses in American history, but give one whole year to civics, on alternate days, counting as a half-unit of credit. My purpose is to lay stress upon the insistent demand for the study of politics and government, not only as a part of but in addition to the study of history, as a separate course.

There is need of a spirit that shall not despise a true utilitarianism in the study of history. Some point of view and selection is necessary. "Politics," said Sir John Seeley, "are vulgar when they are not liberalized by history, and history fades into mere literature when it loses sight of its relation to practical politics." But to teach civics merely by and through history is too much like spending time on mathematics when in Greek history we reach Euclid's time, or on astronomy when the class in European history reaches the time of Galileo. Politics demands a monopoly of a history course, or it demands an exclusive sphere of its own. It must have the latter, as it cannot and should not have the former. We cannot stop to turn the history class into a class for the careful, detailed study of government, the civil and political rights and duties of a citizen.

But if the young American in the high school had to choose between history and civics, I would rather have him know *what* things are, and *how* they *work*, and *what* they are *for* in politics and government in the present, than what men did and how they did it in the past. In mechanics a workman must know how the machinery works rather than who invented the various parts and processes. Even so should the American citizen, a workman and participant in government, know and understand its mechanism and how to keep it burnished for the general good. Then we should have in this democracy scientific men in government and politics as we already have in electricity and bridge-building.

Now, though the element of speculation is exposed to error and to fancy, I believe that it has a place in a high-school class in civics; the thinking process should begin with the young that they may put their propositions through the crucible test of time in further thinking in the

college and the university. University instructors in political science complain that students do not exhibit any signs of experience in thinking. In a political science course on the American federal government the student takes the first few lectures on the meaning and correct use of the words "state," "government," "confederation," "federal union," "alliance," and then in a weekly quiz he is utterly helpless when asked to apply these terms to certain periods of our history or to illustrate and explain their applications by pointing out elements of strength and weakness as known in the terms themselves and as facts of our historical experience. I believe that this is the natural result of the very common failure of our high-school history and civics teachers to discuss theories in connection with, before, and after facts.

Those who oppose subordinating history to political science believe that political science from the point of view of the investigation and comparison of existing systems of government is a useful study for the young. What they oppose in political science is the danger of its so absorbing history as to make us teach and study history from the point of view of existing political institutions, and thus most certainly bias the search for truth, as always happens when it is subordinated to the proving of any special theory. This objection makes necessary the separation in the high school of the serious study of civics from the serious study of history, to be followed by a pursuit of political science in the university.

I am forced to believe that the present situation will not be improved until in addition to the correct study of history, especially English and American history, with proper attention to the relations of facts and theory, conditions and conclusions, causes and effects, every high school shall also give a separate and strong course in civics, with opportunity for the acquirement of correct elementary conceptions of conditions as they now are, of how they came to be, and of how they are tending for the future.

HARRY T. NIGHTINGALE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS ACADEMY

DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION OF THE WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOLS

One of the administrative questions coming to the front in the larger high schools of the country is that of department heads, on which but little material can be found in our educational journals. This contribution, bearing mainly on the unique experiment in Washington, is offered in the hope of bringing out data from additional cities. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Louisville, Atlanta, and San Francisco have taken tentative steps along this line. A system fairly typical of all of these contains seven groups: English, mathematics, history, science, ancient languages,